

received: 2010-02-19
original scientific article

UDC 343.148

TRUSTING EXPERTS: TRUST, TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE

Snježana PRIJIĆ - SAMARŽIJA

University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Omladinska 14, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia

e-mail: prijic@uniri.hr

ABSTRACT

The main aim of my paper is to analyze whether experts have a distinctive testimonial status in society, or whether an expert's testimony requires considerable epistemic deference (expertism). I will try to argue that no matter how reliable a speaker is, this cannot in itself make it rationally acceptable for a hearer to accept their report without assessment of their trustworthiness. However, I admit that standing policy about an expert's trustworthiness, and the social climate concerning experts, which includes sophisticated social constraints in terms of the possibility that experts have deceived us systematically, makes a scenario of deceit and incompetence seem far less probable. Consequently, I will conclude that evidential standards in favour of expert's testimony are less demanded and that they are attainable for ordinary hearers.

Key words: trust, testimony, experts, evidentialism, fundamental and derivative authority

LA FIDUCIA NEGLI ESPERTI: FIDUCIA, TESTIMONIANZA E PROVE

SINTESI

Lo scopo principale del presente contributo è di valutare se gli esperti godano nella società di un riconosciuto status di testimoni, o se per le loro testimonianze assuma particolare importanza il rispetto verso la loro competenza epistemica (esperismo). Si cercherà di dimostrare che, indipendentemente dall'attendibilità del parlante, accettarne le parole, senza valutare se ci si trovi di fronte a un interlocutore degno di fiducia, non è una condotta di per sé razionalmente accettabile da parte dell'ascoltatore. Va tuttavia riconosciuto che – a causa sia degli elevati standard di professionalità richiesta ai parlanti sia del clima sociale, che comprende sofisticate forme di limitazione per quanto attiene alla possibilità di essere sistematicamente ingannati dagli esperti – è molto meno probabile essere vittime di raggiri o incom-

petenza. Ne consegue che tende a venire meno la richiesta di standard probatori, accessibili agli ascoltatori comuni, a sostegno della credibilità della testimonianza degli esperti.

Parole chiave: fiducia, testimonianza, esperti, evidenzialismo, competenza di base e derivata

Should we blindly trust experts? Or, more precisely, can we trust experts more than we can trust other people? Should we base our trust in experts on evidence or do we have an epistemic right to trust them without positive evidence due to their moral and epistemic status? Should we treat the testimony of experts differently than the testimonies we receive from other people?

In this paper, I am going to argue that we do not have the epistemic right to trust experts without positive evidence because their testimony is not distinctive in nature from other people testimonies. However, the degree of evidential support we need to trust experts can be less rigorous because the scenario of non-competence is less probable when compared with other conversational contexts.

EVIDENTIALISM CONCERNING TRUST

We can broadly determine the nature of testimony as "tellings generally" or as saying something in an apparent attempt to convey information to someone else via a verbal assertion or by some other means such as through a note (Fricker, 1995; Audi, 1997; Pritchard, 2004).

Trust here is understood primarily as the doxastic attitude or the acceptance of other people's testimony, which has to be an object of epistemological evaluation and not a matter of giving credulity without evidence. To trust another person simply means to treat her as a source of knowledge (Faulkner, 2002). It is true that in many situations our trust is a kind of emotional or affective attitude, or a spontaneous reactive judgment, in which evidence plays a small role. Many authors stress this perspective on trust, insisting that trust is the matter of a pessimistic or optimistic attitude towards the person and not a matter of deliberation about evidence. I have no difficulties in admitting that in many everyday circumstances, we accept other people's testimonies spontaneously without conscious assessment or that we accept these testimonies even if we have good evidence against them. However, testimonial belief based on such a form of trust has a different epistemic status in comparison to testimony that is accepted on the basis of evidence (Jones, 1996; Adler, 2002). The epistemic strength of testimonial belief ought to be proportional to the strength of the evidence.

Namely, I assume evidentialism here, a viewpoint that takes justified trust (and justified testimonial belief) as a matter of evidence. Evidence is treated here as a just most familiar kind of epistemic reasoning, the link between an informant's testimony that is presented as true and the conditions of truth of this very testimony.¹ In short, I define evidentialism concerning trust in the following way: (E_T) "Trust T towards proposition p is epistemically justified for S at t if and only if having T towards p fits the evidence S has at t " (Feldman, Conee, 2004).

Naturally, any apologist of the evidentialist position needs to be able to offer an account of exactly what a person's evidence consists of and how strong it has to be in order to make trust justified (Prijic Samaržija, 2007). However, for the purposes of this discussion about the value of evidence for justified trust (or justified testimonial belief), we only need to focus our attention on two opposed positions. On the one hand, evidentialism is a position according to which justified trust requires ("always, everywhere and for anyone") the appropriate evidential basis (Clifford, 1879, 183). On the other hand, anti-evidentialists claim that justified trust need not be based on evidence in the majority of those situations in which a person is reliable and where there is no reason for doubt.²

However, it could be seen that there are some situations in which the evidentialist's requirement for evidence need not and, moreover, cannot be applied. It seems that giving trust to experts, epistemic and moral authorities requires special treatment. Even if we do not have an epistemic right to trust other people without evidence, it seems pretty reasonable to allow the blind trust of experts. On many occasions, giving credulity to experts is treated as desirable epistemic behaviour or even as an epistemically virtuous behaviour. In short, if trusting experts is really an epistemically exceptional kind of trusting, it could be a problem for evidentialism. Let us firstly consider the reasons for giving credulity to experts in a more detailed manner that aims to set out the evidentialist's stance about this problem.

EXPERTISM

Let us define expertism as being a position that is composed of three statements: (i) experts exist; (ii) we should ascribe a distinctive testimonial status to experts due

1 Concerning trust, an evidentialist does not deny that non-evidential, affective, emotional etc. considerations can affect or even cause our trusting, but their influence does not make acceptance epistemically responsible (see in Adler, 2002).

2 Evidentialism and anti-evidentialism correspond with traditionally opposed standpoints of reductionism (D. Hume, E. Fricker, J. Adler, P. Faulkner, etc.) and anti-reductionisms (T. Reid, C.A.J., Coady, T. Burge, A.I. Goldman, etc.). While Humean reductionism requires that justified testimonial belief has to be reduced on the basis of perceptual evidence or evidence delivered by reason or memory, Redian anti-reductions have suggested that justified testimonial belief can be based on a kind of blind trust without any evidence.

their exceptional expertise; (iii) therefore, we have the epistemic right to trust experts without evidence. Expertism is a genuine anti-evidentialist position with regards to trusting experts.

1. Experts exist. While it is rather plausible that there are experts in science because they deal with facts, the existence of moral or aesthetic experts, who deal with values, is generally much more problematic. For instance, Milton Friedman holds that differences in values are differences caused by people's tastes which are more or less hard-wired, undebatable and unchangeable (Friedman, 1984). Logical positivists believe that value judgments are "nonsense" and cannot be a matter of expertise because they are not verifiable. Many people think that most people have reasonable ethical competence and that philosophers (who are the prime candidates for moral experts) are inclined to the same self-serving rationalizations as other people. However, the untouchable status of experts in science can be disputed. From Kant, Kuhn, Quine to Goodman and Putnam, we are aware of an intelligible objection that theoretical hypotheses involve a theory laden, cognitively biased, socially manipulated and subjective interpretation of the world (Goldman, 1999). Also, in science as well as in ethics and aesthetics there are battles between experts who propose opposite theories.

In spite of the fact that claiming the first thesis is not without its difficulties, I will assume that it is correct: there are people who are objective (not only reputational) experts. These objective experts are people who, in comparison with other people, are more effective in problem solving. When compared with other people, they are better guides to the truth or better in recognizing a false statement as false, and a true one as true. While the views of ordinary people are typically an ill sorted mass of material derived from experience and tradition which contains inconsistencies and tensions, skilled experts can detect inconsistencies, fallacious inferences, unwarranted generalizations and false premises. In contrast to the average person in ordinary epistemic circumstances, they possess knowledge about the appropriate methods of research and argumentation, more systematized information derived from long term experience of dealing with difficulties, distinctions, critics, and alternative conceptions. They are generally better trained to deal with epistemic, moral or aesthetic issues. Or, we can say like Aristotle that it is reasonable to suppose that none of them can miss the target totally, and that each has gotten something or even a lot of things right.

2. Distinctive testimonial status. In expertism, it is claimed that an expert's testimony requires considerable epistemic deference. I can see at least three reasons why would one ascribe a distinctive testimonial status to experts: (i) standing practice about an expert's reliability; (ii) insufficiency of evidence; (iii) epistemic dependence.

Firstly, it could be seen that we have an epistemic right to treat an expert's knowledge and sincerity with the utmost credulity because there is a standing practice, social climate or ongoing policy that considers experts to be the most reliable sources of knowledge or that they are fundamental testimonial authorities in society (Pappas,

2000). By assuming such credentials about experts, it could be seen that a hearer may believe what an expert says without assessment, evaluation or additional evidence.

Secondly, many philosophers hold that our evidence in favour of other people's testimonies is principally insufficient (Beanblossom, Lehrer, 1970; Coady, 1981; Webb, 1993; Foley, 1994). If it is true, our evidence in favour of an expert's testimony is even more insufficient: when a layperson relies on an expert, that reliance is necessary blind (Hardwig, 1991).³ We, as non-experts in a domain, cannot ever possess enough evidence to evaluate an experts' testimony as credible or non credible. An ordinary cognizer in ordinary epistemic circumstances does not possess, or even can never attain, a high enough level of expertise to evaluate the testimonies of experts. We simply do not have enough knowledge and experience in order to be capable of assessing the truth of an expert's testimony or an expert's reliability. Since our reasons for the acceptance of the content of an expert's report – by definition of them being experts and us as non-experts – cannot be the reasons the experts possess, our evidence about an experts' report cannot be ever sufficient for the justified acceptance of her testimony. If we are not experts in a domain, the relevant defeaters (undefeated defeaters) or certain kinds of experiences, doubts and beliefs that can undermine justified trust simply are not present to us. So, it could be seen that we have no choice other than to blindly trust experts.

Thirdly, we are deeply aware of our epistemic dependence on the testimonies of experts. Without other people testimonies "we should have to confess to knowing pitifully little" (Dummet, 1993, 420). But without expert testimonies our knowledge about biology, physics, medicine, geography of the world, history would be devastated. The majority of our beliefs about nature and society that we acquired throughout our lives are based, finally, on what experts 'tell' us (see also in Beanblossom, Lehrer, 1970; Faulkner, 2002). Our judgments of value will be a mass of inconsistent intuitions, prejudices and stereotypes derived from our subjective and partial interests, understandings of tradition, our temper etc. Behind the majority of testimonies lies extensive research and reports by experts and without these basic experts' testimonies "our lives would be impoverished in startling and debilitating ways" (Lackey, 2006, 1). So, it could be said that such an epistemic dependence on experts entails blind trust as a precondition of the functioning of our reason.

3. Blind trust. In the light of these reasons, it seems that expertism could be an appropriate theory about the testimony of experts, even if we hold that anti--

3 Naturally, it is possible for a hearer to have some background beliefs on a topic in light of which the expert's testimony sounds plausible. However, most often, an ordinary hearer cannot have a sufficient evidential basis about report content *p* in order to recognize and ascribe knowledge to experts. Evidence requirement places too great a burden on the average person, since it requires of them to have the capacity to evaluate the experts. Besides, many people with expertise are people about whom we know little; "Hence, there may be little or no basis for us to grant them derivative authority?" (Foley, 1994, 57–58).

evidentialism is inadequate for ordinary communication or information transactions between non-experts. Experts possess a fundamental epistemic authority and our dependence on their knowledge gives us an epistemic right to trust them without evidence. According to Reid, the paradigm of trusting is like a child's trust in adults. The situation of trusting experts' testimonies is in many ways analogous to his understanding of the trust of children. There is no available experience on which we can base our resistance to trust. Even between those philosophers who are inclined to evidentialism, there are authors who hold that the trust of children is exceptional and that they are justified to give trust without evidence (Fricker, 1987, 1994, 1995). So, it seems that expertism is the most persuasive anti-evidentialist stance and, consequently, the most serious challenge for evidentialism.

FUNDAMENTAL AUTHORITY AND THE INSUFFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE

At the beginning, I would like to show that even if we admit epistemic competence and accept that there are people whose expertise is comparatively better than that of the majority others, there are good reasons to believe that we cannot have the epistemic right to trust them without any evidence.

According to expertism, experts have a fundamental authority in contrast to the derivative authority of other informants. While fundamental authority does not imply the requirement of evidence, derivative authority requires the hearer to give their reasons for thinking that the source's information, abilities, or circumstances put him in an especially good position to make an accurate claim (Foley, 1994). This means that an expert's beliefs and their testimonies may be treated as a basic belief because it cannot, and should not be, supported by the beliefs/epistemic reasons of novices. On the other hand, novice beliefs are beliefs in superstructure that have to be based, inferred or justified by relying on the expert's testimonies. Such an approach to experts' beliefs corresponds to Goldman's determination of expertism as being social foundationalism (equivalent of foundationalism in individual epistemology) or a position that it is socially most desirable (justified) to accept experts' beliefs as the most basic in veritistic sense (Goldman, 1987).

I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a certain standing practice within the community according to which experts are considered to be more reliable sources than any other social source. Also, I agree that trusting a particular expert on a particular occasion is just an episode of trust that relies on the standing policy in a community. However, there is nothing that gives a hearer the epistemic right to trust without assessing whether her source has an adequate social role of expert in the domain in which the trust occurs. A hearer has no epistemic right to believe without any "justifiers" – evidence about the facts or states of affairs that determine the distinguished testimonial status of experts. For instance, the recognition of an alleged ex-

pert's fundamental authority requires that at least some items from the list of "justifiers" have to be accessible to a hearer: that there is a particular standing practice in a community to trust experts, that there are some epistemic reasons why this is standing practice in a community, that this very expert has special expertise in this very domain, that in these very circumstances an expert has no some (epistemic or other) interest to deceive us, etc. (Jones, 1996; Govier, 1998). An expert's distinctiveness cannot be described in terms of fundamental authority, but only as a derivative authority of the highest degree. This means that there is also an evidence requirement for an expert's testimony, but the epistemic standards for the evidence we need are less-demanding because the scenario of non-competence is less probable.

From the standpoint of expertism, it could now be objected that such an evidence requirement, on which I insist, in principle cannot be satisfied in the case of an expert's testimony: the trust novices give to experts is necessarily blind because they can never possess enough expertise for the assessment of expert's testimonies. The insufficiency of evidence is a reason to give, not only derivative, but genuinely distinctive fundamental authority to experts.

I would like to stress here that all situations of testimony are characterized by the fact that an informant knows what the listener does not know. It would not be a case of acquiring knowledge by testimony if a hearer knows *p* about which the testifier has told her, or even if she can deduce or infer *p* from her available evidence. A hearer, novice or not, simply does not possess and, by definition of testimony, cannot possess the evidence for the truth of report content *p* as her informant does. So, an expert's testimony is not so different from any other testimony: the testimony of a passer-by in a foreign town, the testimony of an informant at the information desk or the testimony we can read in a newspaper. All these ordinary informants who "tell" us something new, or unknown, play the role of expert in relation to us because we do not know the information they convey to us. So, there is no reason to think that an insufficiency of evidence about an expert's testimony can justify blind trust more than in any other case of testimony. Contrary to expertism, I claim that when the content of testimony is at stake, there is no principal reason to differ between the testimonies of experts and other people.⁴ An insufficiency of evidence is not a good reason to ascribe a distinctive fundamental authority to experts.

We can resume this part with the conclusion that we are epistemically dependant on experts, but also on other people testimonies. In the case of an experts' testimony

⁴ It could be said that an insufficiency of evidence is not a reason to think that our epistemic right to trust without evidence is better grounded in the case of experts, but that it entails blind trust in all cases including the trust of experts. Such a new diagnosis requires further debate about the strength of this argument about the insufficiency of evidence that is beyond our present purposes. I would only like to show that there is no reason to claim that we have to ascribe a distinctive testimonial status to experts.

(as well as in any other case of testimony) a hearer has to be sensitive to the issue of who would count as a good informant (and sensitive to the relevant defeaters). An expert's distinctiveness is not at stake but cannot be described in terms of fundamental authority, but only in terms of the degree of derivative authority: the evidence we need in the case of experts is less-demanding because the error possibility is less salient than in other cases of testimony.

RELIABILITY OF EXPERTS AND EVIDENCE

There is another way in which it can be argued in favour of expertism. With regards to justified trust, when there is a standing practice to trust experts in a community it is not required for a hearer to possess some "justifiers" or that she is aware of evidence why she believes that an expert is reliable. It is only needed for the practice to be reliable. A hearer, in gaining a justified testimonial belief, has to be engaged in a reliable belief forming process i.e. her testimonial belief has to be formed by processes that tend to produce accurate representations of the world. Evidence (understanding, reasons why we trust) confers no benefit on hearer as cognizer. A lack of evidence about the distinctiveness or reliability of experts will not preclude a hearer from gaining justified testimonial belief (testimonial knowledge).⁵ Moreover, possessing an appropriate level of deference will be sufficient in order to know the truths we believe on the basis of scientist's testimony. We do not also have to know why that deference is appropriate (Roush, 2005).

Let us stress that this externalist or reliabilist reading of expertism suggests a sort of causal theory of testimony. Three conditions have to be satisfied: (i) (there is standing practice that) experts are the most reliable speakers – the most competent believers and the most sincere testifiers; (ii) they cause belief in the hearer; (iii) there is no-defeater on the hearer's side. These conditions are sufficient for the acquisition of justified testimonial belief. It has to be stressed that any causal relationship will not be sufficient to yield justified belief from testimony, but it will in those cases in which a speaker is an expert because an expert, by definition of being an expert, would not believe and testify that *p* if *p* were false⁶ and/or he would not believe and testify *p* without it being so it is *p*.⁷

Moreover, according to such an expertist account, we can attain cognitive success even if we do not possess (adequate) evidence: a hearer can perfectly exercise justified trust no matter how little, false or partial or inappropriate evidence she has. Namely, it is possible to accept true belief on the basis of false or in other way inappropriate (partial, circular, insufficient) evidence. Some authors even stress that

5 Such an approach can be interpreted as a kind of reliabilism or externalism in theory of justification.

6 Nozick's sensitivity condition (Nozick, 1981).

7 Sosa's safety condition (Sosa, 1999; 2002).

such an evidence or fittingness requirement can result with "investigational sloth" – an evidence requirement does not guarantee justified or true belief (Goldman, 2002). Our testimonial belief is not true, or justified because of evidence, but because of reliable processes: it is enough for the informants to be experts and for there to be no defeater on the side of the hearer. Thus, it can be concluded that evidentialism is false because; (i) evidence is irrelevant for acquiring justified belief and (ii) if evidence is irrelevant then we have an epistemic right to trust experts without evidence.

Externalist (reliablistic) strategy in the defense of expertism imposes the task on evidentialism to argue about the relevance and the value of evidence. Expertism correctly captures the contribution that needs to be done by experts in a testimonial exchange, but neglects the positive contribution that a hearer needs to make. While in evidentialism, there is no obstacle to embrace both conditions (the hearers condition or evidence requirement and the speaker conditions or reliability requirement⁸), expertism ignores or even eliminates the hearers condition. I would like to argue that for many reasons such a strategy is inferior to the evidentialist approach (Lackey, 2006).

1. Opacity objection. In a situation in which a hearer has no evidence in favor of experts' trustworthiness and no idea why his testimony can be true, a hearer actually has no idea whether the belief is worthy of acceptance. The merits of the belief will be opaque to the hearer (Lehrer, 2006). Some form of subjective or personal evidence resulting from our background system of evaluation of acceptance, preference over acceptance and reasoning about acceptance is not irrelevant but necessary for justified belief.

2. Rationality of trusting. No matter how reliable an expert is, this cannot by itself make trusting justified in terms of rationality. It would be not only unjustified, psychologically unexplainable but irrational for any hearer to accept an expert's testimony without any evidence about her expertise. Even though irrational beliefs can be correct/true, the only way in which it makes sense to aim at having a correct/true belief is by means of having a rational belief (Wedgewood, 2002). Only if a hearer's trust in the informant is rational, do they need to make a rough estimate of the truth of the claim (Hardin, 2002).

8 Lackey actually proposes a kind of dualist stance: "For every speaker A and hearer B, B justifiedly believes that p on the basis of A's testimony that p only if: 1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p; 2) A's testimony that p is reliable or otherwise truth conducive, and 3) B has appropriate positive reasons for accepting A's testimony that p" (Lackey, 2006, 170). According to Lackey, "The justificatory work of testimonial beliefs can be shouldered exclusively neither by the hearer nor by speaker. [...] [T]he speaker condition ensures reliability while the hearer condition ensures rationality for testimonial justification" (Lackey, 2006, 170).

3. Reliability based on evidence. Hearer and speaker conditions are (logically) independent: it is possible that our trust is based on evidence and the testimonial transmission is not reliable (speaker condition non-satisfied). It is also possible that trust is not based on evidence and the transmission is successful (hearer condition non-satisfied). However, the real question is why successful testimonial transmission is so often found with the possession of good evidence. Why have we so often satisfied a reliable process condition when we have also evidence in favour of this very testimony?

While expertism implies that it is possible that a hearer is massively deceived by his evidence, I would like to claim that this is not possible in the long run in the majority of situations. Evidential defectiveness is transparent and thus recognizable. Our background beliefs also include evidence about our experience in trusting or, to be more precise, about the reliability and successfulness of our evidence. Moreover, I would be keen to claim a certain tracking view of evidence: generally speaking, if a testimonial process is not reliable, H would not have evidence in favour of testimony that *p* and also, if testimonial process is reliable, H would have evidence in favour of testimony of *p*. If one trusts for the wrong reasons or with false (inappropriate evidence), there is a strong tendency to ferret this out. Evidentially based trust and reliable testimonial processes coincide too often to say that evidence is irrelevant or that evidence does not have any relevance for attaining justified belief (or testimonial knowledge).⁹

4. Truth accessibility. The strength of expertism is built on a skeptical objection about the relation between evidence and truth: while evidence that someone can possess does not guarantee the truth of the belief, the appropriate reliable (causal) process does. However, since we lack direct access to the reliability of testimonial process or truth, we have no choice but to approach truth by way of rationality and the possession of adequate evidence. What makes us cognitive beings at all is our capacity for belief, and the goal of our distinctively endeavors are truth: we want our beliefs to correctly and accurately depict the world. If truth were somehow immediately accessible, then the concept of evidentially based trust would be of little significance. But this epistemically ideal situation is quite obviously not the one in which we find ourselves, and it is for this reason that evidence comes into picture (BonJour, 1985).

5. Conflict between experts. If evidence is irrelevant and we have an epistemic right to trust experts without evidence, the question is how to decide which testimony we should accept when two experts are making conflicting claims about the same subject-matter. According to expertism, where there is a standing practice to trust experts in a community, we should trust experts without evidence. It implies that we should accept both testimonies and this means that we have the epistemic right to believe in incompatible beliefs. It is not only phenomenologically non-realistic but it is an extremely dubious stance that has consequences. In contrast, since evidentialism

⁹ Tracking view of evidence is inspired by Steup's proposal of internal reliabilism. See in Steup, 2007; Roush, 2005.

suggests that trust is a matter of evidence about a rival experts' reliability, we should accept the testimony that is better supported by the hearer's evidence (or suspend trust in absence of decisive evidence). In the worst case, acquired testimonial belief could be false (until it is replaced by evidence on better grounded belief).

CONCLUSION

It seems to me that these briefly accounted arguments clearly suggest the strength of evidentialism over expertism both in its foundational and reliabilistic form. We do not have an epistemic right to accept any testimony without evidence no matter how reliable an informant is, i.e. regardless on their distinctive testimonial status. A hearer's evidence about an expert's reliability or unreliability bolsters or defeats the hearer's justification both in accepting testimony from that source and in believing this very testimonial belief.¹⁰

However, it might be completely incorrect to conclude from this that we suggest that there is no difference between experts and ordinary people in terms of their trustworthiness. As I pointed out earlier, experts deserve distinctive testimonial status (but still in terms of derivative authority) because of their comparatively better expertise and exceptional regularity in their trustworthiness or certain epistemic consistency that allows us to ascribe them a relatively stable inner disposition to be trustworthy. A testimonial situation in which we assess an expert, evidential standard that makes trust justified need not to be as demanding as in other conversational contexts. It is worth stressing that evidential standards are not the same for all testimonial situations and what makes testimonial situations different are levels of error possibilities. Evidential standards raised and lowered by the relevance of the scenarios of deceit. Since experts are comparatively the most reliable informants, the alternative scenario of deceit is less probable and the evidential standard requires a slender evidential basis. Similarly, when our informants are not experts, the alternative scenario of deceit becomes relevant, evidential standards have to be stricter and this means that we need additional positive evidence against the scenario of deceit.¹¹

10 It has to be stressed here that even A.I. Goldman, one of the most prominent representatives of reliabilism in theory of justification, admits a certain role of evidence in trusting experts. He wrote: "The usual route to true belief, of course, is to obtain some kind of evidence that points to the true proposition and away from rivals. [...] The rationale for getting such evidence is to get true belief" (Goldman, 2002, 62). It is true that the value of evidence Goldman has in mind is mainly instrumental, but his point is undoubtedly in accordance with evidentialism: he holds that our evidence about the properties of the speaker is crucial evidence for your overall entitlement to accept the speakers' assertion (Goldman, 2001).

11 In support to such a conclusion, it is possible to redefine our definition of evidentialism concerning trust in following way: Trust *T* towards proposition *p* is epistemically justified for *S* at *t* if having *T* towards *p* fits the evidence that eliminates contextually relevant error-possibility concerning *p* at *t*. About this position of trust contextualism, see in Prijic Samaržija, 2007.

ZAUPANJE V STROKOVNJAKE: ZAUPANJE, PRIČEVANJE IN DOKAZI

Snježana PRIJIĆ – SAMARŽIJA

Univerza na Reki, Filozofska fakulteta, Omladinska 14, 51000 Reka, Hrvatska

e-mail: prijic@uniri.hr

POVZETEK

V tradicionalnem smislu je bilo temeljno vprašanje etike verovanja: kaj naj verjamemo? Če ga priredimo za področje epistemologije pričevanja, bi se moralo glasisiti: komu naj zaupamo? Glede na to se epistemologi delijo v dve skupini: tiste, ki trdijo, da bi morali zaupati skoraj vsakomur, in tiste, ki trdijo, da bi morali biti zelo previdni. Povedano z drugimi besedami: medtem ko prvi menijo, da je zaupanje nekakšna lahkovernost brez dokazov, so drugi prepričani, da ne bi smeli zaupati brez primernih dokazov.

Zaupanje, kot ga razumemo v tem prispevku, je doksalna drža, ki mora biti predmet epistemološkega vrednotenja, ne pa stvar lahkovernosti brez dokazov (evidencializem). Toda tudi če nimamo epistemske pravice, da drugim zaupamo brez dokazov, lahko štejemo izkazovanje zaupanja moralnim in epistemskim avtoritetam (znanstvenikom) za zaželeno in odgovorno epistemsko ravnanje (antiredukcionizem strokovnih pričevanj). Osrednji namen tega prispevka je razčleniti, ali imajo strokovnjaki takšen razpoznaven pričevanjski status v družbi ali pa je za njihovo pričevanje potrebno precejšnje epistemsko spoštovanje (ekspertizem).

Poskušala bom dokazati, da ne glede na to, kako zanesljiv je določen govorec, zaradi tega še ni samo po sebi racionalno sprejemljivo, da poslušalec sprejme njegove besede brez ocene, ali je vreden zaupanja. Vendar pa priznam, da je zaradi visokih standardov glede govorčeve strokovnosti in zaradi družbene klime, v katero sodijo tudi sofisticirane družbene omejitve, kar se tiče možnosti, da bi nas strokovnjaki sistematično zavajali, veliko manj verjetno, da bi bili žrtve prevare in nekompetentnosti.

Iz tega sledi zaključek, da se po dokaznih standardih, ki govorijo v prid pričevanju strokovnjakov, manj sprašuje in da so dosegljivi navadnim poslušalcem.

Ključne besede: zaupanje, pričevanje, strokovnjaki, evidencializem, temeljna in izpeljana pristojnost

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